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REMARKS

Status of Claims

Claims 1-54 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 28, 51-54 are independent claims. Claims 2-27 depend from claim 1, and claims 29-50 depend from claim 28. In this Amendment and Reply, Applicants have amended claims 1, 28, 51-54, canceled claims 2, 17, 18, 29, 42 and 43, and have added claims 55 and 56.

Claim Objections

The Examiner objected to claim 1 because there was no support in the specification for "person" which was recited in the preamble. In response Applicants have amended paragraph [0030], line 5 of the specification by inserting "person." Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner withdraw the objections.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC 112

The Examiner rejected claims 1-27 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The Examiner stated that it is not clear who is registering on the web site and who is contacting a third party.

In response, Applicants have amended claim 1 by inserting "by a solicitor" and "by the solicitor." Amended claim 1 now states that the registration is performed by a person (i.e., a solicitor) and the contacting of third parties is also made by the solicitor. Support for the solicitor is found in the specification in paragraph [0037]. Paragraph [0037] notes that the registrant is a potential donor who is also a solicitor. Also the specification in paragraph [0040], lines 3-6 states that the invention provides means for a registrant to contact third parties, such as friends, co-workers and family and seek additional donations. Applicants have similarly amended the remaining independent claims by inserting "by the solicitor." Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections under 35 USC 112.

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Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 102

The Examiner rejected claims 1-27, 28-50, 51-54 under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as anticipated by U.S. Patent Application No. 09/816,210 to Costin, et al. In response, Applicants have amended independent claim 1 by adding, among others, the following limitations:

"displaying one or more web pages with virtual plaque honoring the donor; and updating the virtual plaques on the web pages to recognize new donors."

Support for the virtual plaque is found in paragraph [0047] of the specification. According to the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (MPEP) Section 706.02, for anticipation under 35 USC 102, the reference must teach every aspect of the claimed invention. Also, as noted in Section 706.02 of the MPEP, a rejection based on 35 USC 102(a) can be overcome by amending the claims to patentably distinguish over the cited reference. Applicants submit that Costin does not teach or suggest virtual plaques honoring a donor and also does not teach or suggest updating virtual plaques. Although in the Office Action the Examiner stated that Costin teaches the concept to recognizing primary or new donors in paragraphs [0019] and [0021], Paragraph [0019] of Costin discusses a fundraising system where emails are sent to potential donors and subsequent actions taken by the recipients. Paragraph [0021] of Costin states that when emails are sent by friends and family, response rates are enhanced. Thus neither paragraphs teach or suggest recognizing donors using virtual plaques.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that the invention recited in claim 1 is not anticipated by Costin. Applicants believe that claim 1 is now allowable over Costin and request that the Examiner withdraw his rejection and pass claim 1 to allowance.

Applicants have also amended the other independent claims 28 and 51-54 by adding the limitations recited above. Applicants believe that claims 28 and 51-54 are allowable over Costin for the same reasons stated above.

Claims 2-27 depend from independent claim 1, and claims 29-50 depend from independent claim. These dependent claims include all the limitations of the independent claims from which they depend. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 2-27, 29-50 are allowable over Costin for at least the same reasons stated above.

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Affidavit of Julie A. Schwartz Under 37 CFR 1.131

An affidavit under 37 CFR 1.131 by Applicant Julie A. Schwartz, the first named inventor of the subject patent application, is attached herewith. In the Affidavit, Ms. Schwartz swears back Costin and states that she first conceived the invention claimed in the subject patent application in October 1999. A first product embodying the invention was built in October 2000. Since, the invention claimed in the subject patent application was conceived prior to Costin's priority date of March 2000 based on its earliest filing date, Applicants submit that Costin is not a reference under 35 USC 102(a).

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-27, 28-50, 51-54 under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over Costin. In response, Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 28, 51-54 by adding, among others, the following features:

"displaying one or more web pages with virtual plaque honoring the donor; and updating the virtual plaques on the web pages to recognize new donors."

Applicants submit that Costin does not teach or suggest displaying one or more virtual plaques honoring donors. The virtual plaques had a significantly impact on the success of many fundraising campaigns. The virtual plaques publicly acknowledge donors in an efficient manner and thus motivate donors to make increased amount of donations. Nonprofit and charitable organizations engaged in fundraising campaigns thus benefit from the use of the virtual plaques.

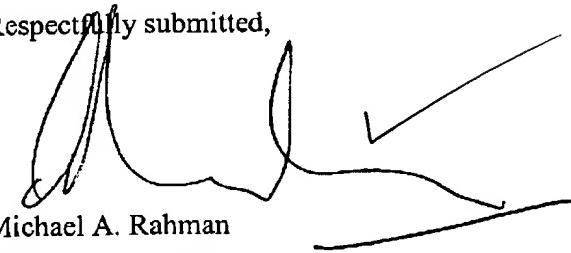
To support the conclusion that the claimed invention is directed to obvious subject matter, the reference must expressly or impliedly suggest the claimed invention.....Ex parte Clapp, 227 USPQ 972. Since Costin does not teach or suggest the virtual plaques, Applicants submit that the independent claims 1, 28, 51-54 are not obvious over Costin. Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections under 35 USC 103 and pass the claims to allowance.

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Applicants respectfully submit that they have complied with the Examiner's requirements and the Application is now believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner pass the Application to allowance. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney if a telephone call could help resolve any remaining matters.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

1 (Amended). A method for conducting a fundraising campaign by an organization or person over a wide-area network, comprising the steps of:

hosting a website including a plurality of linked web pages, the website providing information about the fundraising campaign and soliciting potential donors to make a charitable contribution to the fundraising campaign;

registering, by a solicitor, on the website;

contacting, by the solicitor, third parties via email messages soliciting charitable donations;

providing one or more reports, on the website, including information on the status of the fundraising campaign;

providing a link to a personal donation page in the email messages, the personal donation page having the name and personal campaign goal of the solicitor;

making a charitable contribution, by a donor, on the personal donation page;

displaying one or more web pages with virtual plaque honoring the donor; and
updating the virtual plaques on the web pages to recognize new donors.

28 (Amended). A system for conducting a fundraising campaign by an organization or person over a wide-area network, comprising:

a website including a plurality of linked web pages, the website providing information about the fundraising campaign and soliciting potential donors to make a charitable contribution to the fundraising campaign;

means for registering on the website;

means for contacting third parties via email messages soliciting charitable donations;

one or more reports on the website including information on the status of the fundraising campaign;

a link to a personal donation page in the email messages, the personal donation page having the name and personal campaign goal of a solicitor;

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means for making a charitable contribution, by a donor, on the personal donation
page:

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displaying one or more web pages with virtual plaque honoring the donor; and
updating the virtual plaques on the web pages to recognize new donors.

51 (Amended). A method for hosting a web-based fundraising system over a wide-area network, comprising the steps of:

hosting a website including a plurality of linked web pages, the website soliciting potential donors to make a charitable contribution to a fundraising campaign;

registering, by a solicitor, on the website;

contacting, by the solicitor, third parties via email messages soliciting charitable donations;

providing one or more reports, on the website, including information on the status of the fundraising campaign;

providing a link to a personal donation page in the email messages, the personal donation page having the name and personal campaign goal of the solicitor;

making a charitable contribution, by a donor, on the personal donation page;

displaying one or more web pages with virtual plaque honoring the donor; and

updating the virtual plaques on the web pages to recognize new donors.

52 (Amended). A computer program product including a program code embodied in a storage medium for carrying out the method steps for conducting a fundraising campaign by an organization over a wide-area network, the method comprising the steps of:

hosting a website including a plurality of linked web pages, the website providing information about the fundraising campaign and soliciting potential donors to make a charitable contribution to the fundraising campaign;

registering, by a solicitor, on the website;

contacting, by the solicitor, third parties via email messages soliciting charitable donations;

providing one or more reports, on the website, including information on the status of the fundraising campaign;

providing a link to a personal donation page in the email messages, the personal donation page having the name and personal campaign goal of the solicitor;

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making a charitable contribution, by a donor, on the personal donation page;
displaying one or more web pages with virtual plaque honoring the donor; and
updating the virtual plaques on the web pages to recognize new donors.

53 (Amended). A method for conducting a fundraising campaign by an organization over a wide-area network, comprising the steps of:

hosting a website including a plurality of linked web pages, the website providing information about the fundraising campaign and soliciting potential donors to make a charitable contribution to the fundraising campaign;

registering, by a solicitor, on the website;
generating a personalized donation web page for a solicitor;
generating a link to the personalized web page;
contacting, by the solicitor, third parties via email messages soliciting charitable donations, the emails having the link to the personal donation web page;
receiving the email messages;
reaching the personalized donation web page using the link;
making a charitable donation, by a donor, on the personalized donation page;
displaying one or more web pages with virtual plaque honoring the donor; and
updating the virtual plaques on the web pages to recognize new donors.

54 (Amended). A system for conducting a fundraising campaign by an organization over a wide-area network, comprising:

a website including a plurality of linked web pages, the website providing information about the fundraising campaign and soliciting potential donors to make a charitable contribution to the fundraising campaign;
means for registering on the website;
one or more personalized donation web pages for a solicitor;
one or more links to the personalized donation web pages;
means for contacting third parties via email messages soliciting charitable donations, the emails having the links to the personalized donation web pages; and
means for reaching the personalized donation web page using the link;

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means for making a charitable donation on the personalized donation page;
means for displaying one or more web pages with virtual plaque honoring the
donor; and
means for updating the virtual plaques on the web pages to recognize new donors.

Please add the following new claims:

55. A method for conducting a fundraising campaign by an organization or person over a wide-area network, comprising the steps of:

hosting a website including a plurality of linked web pages, the website providing information about the fundraising campaign and soliciting potential donors to make a charitable contribution to the fundraising campaign;
registering, by a solicitor, on the website;
contacting, by the solicitor, third parties via email messages soliciting charitable donations; and
providing a link to a personal donation page in the email messages, the personal donation page having the name and personal campaign goal of the person;
making a charitable contribution, by a donor, on the personal donation page.

56. A system for conducting a fundraising campaign by an organization or person over a wide-area network, comprising:

a website including a plurality of linked web pages, the website providing information about the fundraising campaign and soliciting potential donors to make a charitable contribution to the fundraising campaign;
means for registering on the website;
means for contacting third parties via email messages soliciting charitable donations;
one or more reports on the website including information on the status of the fundraising campaign;
a link to a personal donation page in the email messages, the personal donation page having the name and personal campaign goal of a solicitor; and